

W  
Bldg + Grounds

12 February 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director (Support)

THROUGH : Deputy Director (Support)

SUBJECT : Souvenir Fragment of the William D.  
Blossom Memorial Cat-Walk

REFERENCE : Memorandum to AD/NE from A/DD/S,  
dtd 11 Feb 63

1. This memorandum is for information only.
2. My delight upon receipt of above mentioned souvenir is only surpassed by the intelligence contained in paragraph 2 of the reference. Aforesaid delight is however tarnished by the use of the past tense in referenced paragraph 2. The undersigned's delight would have been perfect had he been privileged to participate in aforementioned demolition.
3. All gratitude for the paper weight souvenir. It will be treasured.

SN

Sherman Kent  
Assistant Director  
National Estimates

Release 2003/04/29 : CIA-RDP84-00780R00

John F. Kennedy

Book

JFK

A successful  
covert operation.

Please return to  
Mr. [illegible]

Release 2003/04/29 : CIA-RDP84-00780R00

11 FEB 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director for National Estimates

VIA : Deputy Director (Support)

SUBJECT : The William D. Blossom Memorial Cat-Walk

REFERENCES : (a) Holograph Memorandum from AD/NE to DD/A  
dtd 27 Jan 55

(b) Memorandum from Special Cat-Walk Consultant  
to DD/A dtd 2 Feb 55

1. This memorandum is for information only.
2. Subject has been demolished.
3. The attached paper weight, carved from one of the supporting timbers of the historic structure, is presented to the AD/NE as a permanent reminder of his interest in and devotion to subject.

15/  
H. Gates Lloyd  
Assistant Deputy Director  
(Support)

Attachment

11 February 1963

Mr. Sherman Kent

7E48

HQ

Dear Sherm:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your anonymous letter of 5 February and to express my appreciation for your continued interest in support problems. I will, of course, respect your wishes and will not give this letter to my deputy for action.

While we are making a study of this situation, which as you know will undoubtedly take some time, I am pleased to note that my deputy has recognized your genuine interest in support matters generally and particularly catwalks.

(OVER)

May this memento lay heavily upon your desk.

B/  
LKW

Ground Hog Day 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Colonel L. K. White

SUBJECT : The William D. Blossom Memorial Cat-Walk

REFERENCE : Memorandum from Sherman Kent, AD/NE,  
dated 27 January 1955, attached

1. In accordance with your instructions to give highest priority to widening the subject cat-walk, a ten-man task force has devoted their entire attention to this problem since last Friday. All restrictions relating to the payment of overtime have been disregarded, and the undersigned, the Agency expert on cats, cat-walks, and cat-walking, was taken off the Rubenstein case and flown down from New York to head this important work here at Headquarters.

2. Through the kind assistance of the Librarian of Congress, we have been fortunate in discovering the origin and history of the subject cat-walk. You may wish to pass on to Mr. Kent a few of the more interesting facts. William D. Blossom was an employee of the Christian Heurich Brewing Company. After fifty years of loyal and devoted service, he rose to the position of day janitor and messenger in the Brewery. One of his principle duties was to transport the product of his company from the plant to South Building when emergency orders for supplies were received. One hot day in July 1942 (not, as erroneously stated in the referenced document, 1943), Mr. Blossom, making his third trip that afternoon, was overcome by the heat while climbing the steep bank between 25th Street and South Building, and passed away without regaining consciousness. His friends, comrades, and admirers raised a fund to build the subject cat-walk, which was dedicated to his memory with appropriate ceremonies upon completion. After the war, we understand that a direct pipeline between South Building and the Brewery was installed to prevent any recurrence of such an unfortunate episode.

3. Unfortunately the Office of the General Counsel finds that the original Deed of Gift, now in the files of the Archives Building, prohibits any alterations or changes in the original structure without the permission of Mr. Blossom's descendants. He was survived by two daughters,

both of whom

both of whom returned some years ago to their native Mississippi. The Security Office has ascertained that they are now living in the vicinity of Itta Bene, Miss., and the Contact Office [redacted] has been alerted to find their views regarding the widening of their father's memorial.

STAT

4. In view of the very real possibility that it may not be possible to locate the Blossom descendants and obtain their unanimous consent to the proposed changes, we have asked Legislative Counsel to draft a special bill to be introduced into the current Congress, permitting the local Court to amend the original Deed. This will be forwarded to you during the next few days.

5. Like all other important monuments in Washington, the cat-walk falls under the jurisdiction of the Fine Arts Commission, whose permission must be obtained before any alterations can be made. Their annual inspection of this historic installation takes place, you will recall, every Spring when the flowering cherry trees in front of South Building are at their best, and tea is served by the Director in the center of the forecourt. (In this connection, we might mention here that the Shortage Report covering the writeoff of one silver-plated teaspoon, missing after the 1952 inspection by the Fine Arts Commission, is nearly completed and should be ready for your signature in the next few months.)

6. In view of the delays which might be involved in obtaining the necessary permission for the physical widening of the subject cat-walk, two temporary measures have been effected which, we believe, will relieve the situation on an ad hoc basis:

a. Procurement Division of the Logistics Office is getting bids from several commercial manufacturers of traffic control equipment for some specially designed traffic lights controlled by photo-electric cells. Traffic on the cat-walk will thus be automatically regulated and the danger and discomfort involved in having to pass anyone coming in the opposite direction will be avoided entirely. Emergency generating equipment with automatic switches in the event of commercial power failure, will also be provided. Under this system green and red lights will be installed over each end of the cat-walk, the red light to read "OCCUPED", and the green, "LIBRE." In the event of an air raid alert, both lights will flash intermittently, reading "Closed to the public; for Civil Defense personnel only."

b. The Medical Office

b. The Medical Office has also been alerted to this critical situation. A psycho-physical survey of Agency personnel who use the cat-walk is being undertaken in order to eliminate those who are not physically qualified to make the passage without discommoding pedestrians coming in the opposite direction. Appropriate badges will be issued to those who pass the rigorous tests now being devised by Johns Hopkins University in collaboration with Arthur Murray and Marilyn Monroe Industries, Inc. Special reducing pills will be issued free of charge to all who fail to meet the specifications.

7. In accordance with your original instructions, all costs involved in the foregoing, including the Saturday and Sunday overtime of the task force and the undersigned's per diem compilation and plane fare from New York and return, will be charged to the 1955 budget of the Office of National Estimates.

JOHN Q. WHOLECLOTH  
Special Consultant

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

27 Jan 1955

Memo for Col White DD/A.

1. When the inspection of grounds & facilities concludes that the Agency has got its equity out of <sup>the</sup> wooden cat-walk that circles the west end of South Building & decides to replace it - would you please please please please use your good offices to promote a new one of slightly greater width? Eight inches would do the trick, twelve would be luxurious.
2. I have a new silver dollar for the person who ~~will~~ sets fire to the present structure within a week.
3. The present structure to my personal knowledge was built not later than 1943.

*Sherman Kent*



6 February

Colonel White:

Mr. Kent's complaints in the attached note have been taken care of. In fact, Mr. Kent told Mr. Lloyd that the drinking fountain was in working order about an hour after he wrote this note!

sbo

SHERMAN KENT

STAT

5 February 1963

Dear Red,

This is another anonymous letter. One wash basin in the men's room in corridor F, seventh floor has been out of order almost from the day we moved in. A second one went on the blink yesterday. The drinking fountain in corridor E, seventh floor is inoperable 95% of the time. Since our folks have a laudable appreciation of cleanliness and do not happen to be camels who can last the day on their breakfast supply of fluids, our corner of the building is fast getting the reputation as a hardship post.

Guess who.

would be obliged if you did NOT give this to your Deputy for the kind of handling he made famous with his unhelpful work on the cat walk.

Approved For Release 2003/04/29 : CIA-RDP84-00780R000100110025-4



*The Deputy Director for  
Support*

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